A DISCOURSE CONCERNING PRAYER *Ex tempore*,

OR,

By pretence of the Spirit,

In justification of Authorized and Set-forms of LITURGIE.

by Jeremy Taylor D.D.

1 COR. 14.32.

Πνεύματα προφητῶν προφήταις ὑποτάσσεται· Οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ἀκαταστασίας ὁ Θεὸς, ἀλλ' εἰρήνης· ὡς ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῶν ἁγίων.

And the spirits of the Prophets are subject to the Prophets. For God is not the Author of confusion, but of peace, as in all Churches of the Saints.

Printed for *Richard Royston*, 1647.

A Diſcourſe concerning PRAYER *Ex tempore*, &c.

I Have read over this Book which the Aſſembly of Divines is pleaſed to call *The Directory for Prayer*; I confeſſe I came to it with much expectation, and was in ſome meaſure confident I ſhould have found it an exact and unblameable modell of Devotion, free from all thoſe objections which men of their own perſwaſion had obtruded againſt the publike Liturgy of the Church of *England*; or at leaſt, it ſhould have been compoſed with ſo much artifice and fineneſſe, that it might have been to all the world an Argument of their learning and excellency of ſpirit, if not of the goodneſſe and integrity of their Religion and purpoſes. I ſhall give no other character of the whole, but that the publike diſreliſh which I finde amongſt perſons of great piety, of all qualities, not only of great, but even of ordinary underſtandings, is to, me ſome argument that it lies ſo open to the objections even of common ſpirits, that the Compilers of it did intend more to prevaile by the ſucceſſe of their Armies, then the ſtrength of reaſon, and the proper grounds of perſwaſion, which yet moſt wiſe and good men believe to be the more Chriſtian way of the two. But Sir, you have engaged me to ſay ſomething in particular to ſatisfie your conſcience. In which alſo I deſire I may reſerve a leave to my ſelf to conceal much, if I may in little doe you ſatisfaction.

Numb. 2. I ſhall therefore decline to ſpeak of the Efficient cauſe of this Directory, and not quarrell at it that is was compoſed, againſt the Lawes both of *England* and all Chriſtendome. If the thing were good and pious, I ſhould learn to ſubmit to the impoſition, and never quarrell at the incompetency of his authority that engaged me to doe pious and holy things. And it may be when I am a little more uſed to it, I ſhall not wonder at a Synod, in which not one Biſhop ſits (in the capacity of a Biſhop) though I am moſt certain this is the firſt example in *England*, ſince it was firſt Chriſtned. But for preſent it ſeemes ſomething hard to digeſt it, becauſe I know ſo well that all Aſſemblies of the Church have admitted Prieſts to conſultation and diſpute, but never to authority and deciſion, till the Pope enlarging the phylacteries of the Archimandrites and Abbots, did ſometimes by way of priviledge and diſpenſation give to ſome of them deciſive voyces in publike Councels. But this was one of the things in which he did innovate and invade againſt the publike reſolutions of Chriſtendome, though he durſt not doe it often, and when he did it, it was in very ſmall and inconſiderate numbers.

Numb. 3. I ſaid I would not meddle with the Efficient, and I cannot meddle with the Finall cauſe, nor gueſſe at any other ends and purpoſes of theirs then at what they publiquely profeſſe, which is the abolition and deſtruction of the Book of Common-Prayer; which great change, becauſe they are pleaſed to call Reformation, I am content in charity to believe they think it ſo, and that they have *Zelum Dei*, but whether *ſecundum ſcientiam*, according to knowledge or no, muſt be judged by them who conſider the matter and the forme.

Numb. 4. But becauſe the matter is of ſo great variety and minute conſideration, every part whereof would require as much ſcrutiny as I purpoſe to beſtow upon the whole, I have for the preſent choſen to conſider only the form of it; and becauſe it pretends againſt the form of ſet Lyturgy, and that *ex tempore* forms doe ſucceed in room of the eſtabliſhed and determined ſervices, I ſhall give you my judgement of it, without any ſharpneſſe or bitterneſſe of ſpirit, for I am reſolved not

to

to be angry with any man of another perſwaſion, as knowing that I differ juſt as much from them as they doe from me.

And firſt, I conſider that the true ſtate of the Queſtion is only this, Whether it is better to pray to God with conſideration or without? whether is the wiſer man of the two, hee who thinks, and deliberates what to ſay, or he that utters his mind as faſt as it comes? Whether is the better man, he who out of reverence to God is moſt careſull and curious that he offend not in his tongue, and therefore he himſelfe deliberates and takes the beſt guides he can, or he who out of the confidence of his own abilities or other exteriour aſſiſtances, ſpeaks what ever comes uppermoſt? *Numb.* 5.

And here I have the advice and councell of a very wiſe man, no leſſe than *Solomon*, *Eccleſ.* 5. 2. *Be not raſh with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be haſty to utter any thing before God, for God is in heaven and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few.* The conſideration of the vaſt diſtance between God and us, Heaven and Earth, ſhould create ſuch apprehenſions in us, that the very beſt and choyceſt of our offertoryes are not acceptable but by Gods gracious vouchſafeing and condeſcenſion: and therefore ſince we are ſo much indebted to God for accepting our beſt, it is not ſafe ventured to preſent him with a dowbaked ſacrifice, and put him off with that which in nature and humane conſideration is abſolutely the worſt; for ſuch is all the crude and imperfect utterance of our more imperfect conceptions. But let *Solomons* reaſon be what it will, good we are ſure it is. Let us conſider who keeps the precept beſt; He that deliberates, or he that conſiders not but when he ſpeakes: What man in the world is haſty *to offer any thing before God*, if he bee not who prayes *ex tempore*? And then adde to it but the weight of *Solomons* reaſon, and let any man anſwer me if he thinks it can well ſtand with that reverence we owe to the Immenſe, the infinite, and to the eternall God, the God of wiſdome, to offer him a ſacrifice which we durſt not preſent to a Prince, or a prudent Governour in *re ſeriâ*, ſuch as our prayers ought to be. *Numb.* 6.

And that this may not be daſhed with a pretence it is carnall reaſoning, *Numb.* 7.

reaſoning I deſire it may be remembred, that it is the argument God himſelfe uſes againſt lame, maimed, and imperfect ſacrifices, *Goe and offer this to thy Prince*, ſee if he will accept it: Implying, that the beſt perſon is to have the beſt preſent; and what the Prince will ſlight as truly unworthy of him, much more is it unfit for God. For God accepts not of any thing we give or doe, as if he were bettred by it: for therefore its eſtimate is not taken by its relation or naturall complacency to him, it is all alike to him, for in it ſelfe it is to him as nothing. But God accepts it by its proportion, and commenſuration to us. That which we call our beſt, and is truly ſo in humane eſtimate, that pleaſes God, for it declares that if we had better, we would give it him. But to reſerve the beſt, ſayes too plainly, that we think any thing is good enough for him. As therefore God in the Law would not be ſerved by that which was imperfect in *genere naturæ*: ſo neither now nor ever will that pleaſe him which is imperfect in *genere morum*, or *materiâ intellectuali*, when we can give a better.

Numb. 8. Well then, in the nature of the thing, *ex tempore* forms have much the worſe of it. But it is pretended that there is ſuch a thing as the gift of Prayer, a praying with the Spirit, *Et neſcit tarda molimina ſpiritus ſancti gratia.* Gods Spirit (if he pleaſes) can doe his work as well in an inſtant, as in long premeditation. And to this purpoſe are pretended thoſe places of Scripture which ſpeak of the aſſiſtance of Gods Spirit in our prayers, *Zech.* 12. 10. *And I will poure upon the houſe of* David, *and the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, the ſpirit of grace and ſupplication.* But eſpecially *Rom.* 8. 26. *Likewiſe the Spirit alſo helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought, but the Spirit it ſelfe maketh interceſſion for us with groanings that cannot be uttered, &c.* From whence the Concluſion that is inferred is in the words of Saint *Paul*, *That we muſt pray with the ſpirit*, therefore not with ſet forms, therefore *ex tempore.*

Numb. 9. The Collection is ſomewhat wild; for there is great independence in the ſeverall parts, and much more is in the Concluſion, then was virtually in the premiſes. But ſuch as it is the Authors

Authors of it I ſuppoſe will own it. And therefore we will examine the maine deſign of it, and then conſider the particular meanes of its perſwaſion, quoted in the objection.

It is one of the priviledges of the Goſpel, and the benefit of Chriſts aſcenſion, that the holy Ghoſt is given unto the Church, and is become to us the fountaine of gifts and graces. But theſe gifts and graces are improvements and helps of our naturall faculties, of our art and induſtry, not extraordinary, miraculous, and immediate infuſions of habits and gifts. That without Gods Spirit we cannot pray aright; that our infirmities need his help; that we know not what to ask of our ſelves, is moſt true: and if ever any Heretique was more confident of his own naturals, or did ever more undervalue Gods grace then ever the *Pelagians* did, yet he denyes not this. But what then? Therefore without ſtudy, without art, without premeditation, without learning, the ſpirit gives the gift of prayer, and it is his grace, that without any naturall or artificiall help makes us pray *ex tempore?* No ſuch thing: The Objection proves nothing of this. *Numb.* 10.

Here therefore we will joyn iſſue, whether the gifts and helps of the Spirit, be immediate infuſions of the Faculties, and powers, and perfect abilities? Or that he doth aſſiſt us only by his aydes externall and internall, in the uſe of ſuch means which God and nature hath given to man, to ennoble his ſoul, better his Faculties, and to improve his underſtanding? That the aydes of the holy Ghoſt are only aſſiſtances to us in the uſe of naturall and artificiall means, I will undertake to prove, and from thence it will evidently follow, that labour, and hard ſtudy, and premeditation will ſooneſt purchaſe the gift of prayer, and aſcertain us of the aſſiſtance of the ſpirit; and therefore ſet forms of prayer, ſtudyed and conſidered of, are in a true and proper ſenſe, and without enthuſiaſm, the fruits of the ſpirit. *Numb.* 11.

1. Gods Spirit did aſſiſt the Apoſtles by wayes extraordinary, and fit for the firſt inſtitution of Chriſtianity: but doth aſſiſt us now by the expreſſes of thoſe firſt aſſiſtances which he gave to them immediately. So that the holy Ghoſt is the author of our faith, and we believe with the ſpirit (it is Saint *Pauls* expreſſion) *Numb.* 12.

pression) and yet our beliefe comes by hearing and reading the holy Scriptures and their interpretations. Now reconcile these two together, Faith comes by hearing, and yet is the gift of the Spirit, and it sayes, that the gifts of the Spirit are not extasies, and immediate infusions of habits, but helps from God to enable us upon the use of the meanes of his own appointment to believe, to speak, to understand, to prophecy, and to pray.

Numb. 13. 2. And that these are for this reason called gifts, and graces, and issues of the Spirit, is so evident and notorious, that the speaking of an ordinary revealed truth, is called in Scripture *a speaking by the Spirit*, 1 Cor. 12. 8. *No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the holy Ghost.* For if the holy Ghost supplyes us with materials, and fundamentals for our building, it is then enough to denominate the whole edifice to be of him, although the labour and the workmanship be ours, upon anothers stock. And this is it which the Apostles speaks, 1 *Cor.* 2. 13. *Which things also we speak, not in the words which mans wisdome teacheth, but which the holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spirituall things with spirituall.* The holy Ghost teaches, yet it is upon our co-operation, our study and endeavour, while we compare spirituall things with spirituall; the holy Ghost is said to teach us, because these spirituals were of his suggestion and revelation.

Vid. Act. 19. 21. Act. 16. 7, 9, 10.

Numb. 11. 3. For it is a rule of the Schools, and there is much reason in it, *Habitus infusi infunduntur per modum acquisitorum*, whatsoever is infused into us, is in the same manner infused as other things are acquired, that is, step by step, by humane meanes and co-operation, and grace does not give us new faculties, and create another nature, but meliorates and improves our own. And what S. *Paul* said in the Resurrection, is also true in this Question, *That is not first which is spirituall, but that which is naturall, and then that which is spirituall.* The graces and gifts of the Spirit are postnate, and are additions to art and nature. God directs our councels, opens our understandings, regulates our will, orders our affections, supplies us with Objects, and Arguments, and opportunities, and revelations *inscriptis*, and then most when we most imploy our own endeavours,

deavours, God loving to bleſſe all the meanes, and inſtruments of his ſervice, whether they be naturall or acquiſite.

But whoſoever ſhall look for any other gifts of the ſpirit beſides the parts of nature helped by induſtry and Gods bleſſing upon it, and the revelations or the ſuppplyes of matter in holy Scripture, will be very ſarre to ſeek, having neither reaſon, promiſe, nor experience of his ſide. For why ſhould the ſpirit of Prayer be any other than as the gift and ſpirit of faith (as S. *Paul* calls it, 2 *Cor.* 4. 13) acquired by humane meanes uſing divine aids? that is, by our endeavcurs in hearing, reading, Catechizing, deſires to obey, and all this bleſſed and promoted by God, this produces faith. And if the ſpirit of Prayer be of greater conſequence, and hath a promiſe of a ſpeciall prerogative, let the firſt be proved, and the ſecond be ſhewn in any good record, and then I will believe it too. *Numb.* 15.

4. And the parallel of this Argument I the rather urge, becauſe I find praying in the holy Ghoſt joyned with graces, which are as much Gods gifts and productions of the ſpirit as any thing in the world, and yet which the Apoſtle preſſes upon us as duties and things put into our power, and to be improved by our induſtry, and thoſe are faith (in which I before inſtanced) and charity, *Epiſt. Jud. ver.* 20. *But ye (beloved) building up your ſelves on your moſt holy Faith, praying in the holy Ghoſt, keep your ſelves in the love of God.* All of the ſame conſideration, Faith, and Prayer and Charity, all gifts of the Spirit, and yet build up your ſelves in faith, and keep your ſelves in love, and therefore by a parity of reaſon, improve your ſelves in the ſpirit of prayer, that is, God by his Spirit having ſupplyed us with matter, let our induſtry and co-operations *per modum naturæ*, improve theſe gifts, and build upon this foundation. *Numb.* 16.

So that in effect, praying in the holy Ghoſt or with the Spirit, is nothing but prayer for ſuch things and in ſuch manner which God by his Spirit hath taught us in holy Scripture. Holy prayers, ſpirituall ſongs, ſo the Apoſtle calls one part of prayer, *viz.* Euchariſticall or thankſgiving, that is, prayers or ſongs which are ſpirituall *in materiâ*. And if they be called ſpirituall for the efficient cauſe too, the holy Ghoſt being the Author of them, it comes all to one, for therefore he is the cauſe and giver of them, *Numb.* 17.

because he hath in his word revealed, what things we are to pray for, and there also hath taught us the manner.

Numb. 18. And this is exactly the Doctrine I plainly gather from the objected words of Saint *Paul*, (*The Spirit helpeth our infirmities*) How so? it followes immediately, *For we know not what we should pray for as we ought*: So that therefore he is the Spirit of supplication and prayer, because he teaches us what to ask, and how to pray, so he helps our infirmities, συναντιλαμβάνεται, it is in the Greek *Collaborantem adjuvat*. It is an ingeminate expression of helping us in our labours together with him. Now he that shall say this is not sufficiently done by Gods Spirit in Scripture by Prayers, and Psalmes, and Hymnes, and Spirituall Songs, and precepts concerning prayer, set down in that holy repository of truth and devotion, undervalues that inestimable treasure of the Spirit; and if it be sufficiently done there, he that will multiply his hopes farther, then what is sufficient, may possibly deceive himself, but never deceive God, and make him multiply and continue miracles, to justifie his fancy.

Numb. 19. 5. Better it is to follow the Scriptures for our guide, as in all things else, so in this particular, *Ephes.*6.17,18. *Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit.* The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit; praying in the Spirit is one way of using it, indeed the only way that he here specifies. Praying in the Spirit then being the using of this Sword, and this Sword being the Word of God, it followes evidently, that praying in the Spirit, is praying in or according to the Word of God, that is, in the directions, rules and expresses of the Word of God, that is, of the holy Scriptures.

Numb. 20. The summe is this. Whatsoever this gift is, or this spirit of Prayer, it is to be acquired by humane industry, by learning of the Scriptures, by reading, by conference, and by whatsoever else faculties are improved, and habits enlarged. Gods Spirit hath done his work sufficiently this way, and he loves not either in nature or grace (which are his two great sanctions) to multiply miracles when there is no need.

Numb. 21. 6. So that now I demand, Whether or no, since the expiration of the Age of Miracles, does not Gods Spirit most assist us, when we

we moſt endeavour and moſt uſe the meanes? He that ſayes, No, diſcourages all men from reading the Scriptures, from induſtry, from meditation, from conference, from humane Arts and Sciences, and from whatſoever elſe God and good Lawes provoke us to by propoſition of rewards: But if, Yea, (as moſt certainly God will beſt crown the beſt endeavours) then the ſpirit of Prayer is greateſt in him, who (ſuppoſing the like capacities and opportunities) ſtudies hardeſt, reads moſt, practices moſt religiouſly, deliberates moſt prudently; and then by how much want of meanes is worſe then the uſe of meanes, by ſo much *ex tempore* Prayers are worſe then deliberate and ſtudyed. Excellent therefore is the councell of S. *Peter*, 1 *Ep. Chap.* 4. *ver.* 11. *If any man ſpeak, let him ſpeak as the Oracles of God*, (not lightly then and inconſiderately) *If any man miniſter, let him doe it as of the ability which God giveth*: (great reaſon then to put all his abilities and faculties to it) and whether of the two does moſt likely doe that, he that takes paines, and conſiders, and diſcuſſes, and ſo approves and practiſes a form, or he that never conſiders what he ſayes, till hee ſayes it, needs not much deliberation to paſſe a ſentence.

7. Laſtly, did not the Penmen of the Scripture, write the Epiſtles and Goſpels reſpectively all by the Spirit? Moſt certainly, holy men of God *ſpoke as they were moved by the holy Ghoſt*, ſaith Saint *Peter*. And certainly they were moved by a more immediate motion, and a motion nearer to an Enthuſiaſme, then now adayes in the gift and ſpirit of Prayer. And yet in the midſt of thoſe great aſſiſtances and motions they did uſe ſtudy, art, induſtry, and humane abilities. This is more then probable in the different ſtyles of the ſeverall Books, ſome being of admirable art, others lower and plaine. The words were their own, at leaſt ſometimes, not the holy Ghoſts. And if the Fathers and Grammarians were not deceived by falſe Copies, but that they truly did obſerve, ſometimes to be propriety of expreſſion in the language, ſometimes not true Greek, who will think thoſe errours or imperfections in Grammar, were (in reſpect of the words I ſay preciſely) immediate inſpirations and dictates of the holy Ghoſt, and not rather their own productions of induſtry and humanity? But clearely ſome of their words were the words *Numb.* 22.

of *Aratus*, ſome of *Epimenides*, ſome of *Menander*, ſome of Saint *Paul*, [*This ſpeak I, not the Lord, 1 Cor. 7.*] and yet becauſe the holy Ghoſt renewed their memory, improved their underſtanding, ſupplyed to ſome their want of humane learning, and ſo aſſiſted them that they ſhould not commit an errour in fact or opinion, neither in the narrative nor dogmaticall parts, therefore they writ by the Spirit. Since then we cannot pretend upon any grounds of probability to an inſpiration ſo immediate as theirs, and yet their aſſiſtances which they had from the Spirit did not exclude humane arts, and induſtry, but that the ableſt Scholler did write the beſt, much rather is this true in the gifts and aſſiſtances we receive, and particularly in the gift of Prayer, it is not an *ex tempore* and an inſpired faculty, but the faculties of nature and the abilities of art and induſtry are improved and ennobled by the ſupervening aſſiſtances of the Spirit.

Numb. 23. And now let us take a man that pretends he hath the gift of Prayer, and loves to pray *ex tempore*, I ſuppoſe his thoughts goe a little before his tongue; I demand then, Whether cannot this man, when it is once come into his head, hold his tongue, and write down what he hath conceived? If his firſt conceptions were of God, and Gods Spirit, then they are ſo ſtill, even when they are written. Or is the Spirit departed from him, upon the ſight of a pen and Ink-horn? It did uſe to be otherwiſe among the old and new Prophets, whether they were Prophets of Prediction, or of ordinary Miniſtery. But if his conception may be written, and being written is ſtill a production of the Spirit, then it follows that ſet-forms of Prayer deliberate and deſcribed, may as well be a praying with the Spirit, as ſudden forms and *ex tempore* out-lets.

Numb. 24. Now the caſe being thus put, I would faine know what the difference is between deliberate and *ex tempore* Prayers, ſave only that in theſe there is leſſe conſideration and prudence; for that the other are (at leaſt as much as them) the productions of the Spirit, is evident in the very caſe put in this very Argument: and whether to conſider and to weigh them, be any diſadvantage to our devotions, I leave it to all wiſe men to determine. So that in effect, ſince after the pretended aſſiſtance of the Spirit in

in our Prayers, we may write them down, conſider them, try the ſpirits, and ponder the manner, the reaſon and the religion of the addreſſe; let the world judge whether this ſudden utterance and *ex tempore* forms be any thing elſe, but a direct reſolution not to conſider before-hand what we ſpeak.

But let us look a little further into the myſtery, and ſee what is meant in Scripture by *praying with the Spirit*. In what ſenſe the holy Ghoſt is called the *ſpirit of Prayer*, I have already ſhewn, *viz.* by the ſame reaſon, as he is the *ſpirit of faith*, of *prudence*, of *knowledge*, of *underſtanding*, and the like. But *praying with the ſpirit* hath beſides this other ſenſes alſo in Scripture. I finde in one place, that then we pray with the Spirit, when the holy Ghoſt does actually excite us to deſires and earneſt tendencies to the obtaining our holy purpoſes, when he gives us zeale and devotion, charity and fervour, ſpirituall violence and holy importunity. This ſenſe is alſo in the latter part of the objected words of Saint *Paul*, *Rom.*8. *The Spirit it ſelfe maketh interceſsion for us with groanings, &c.* Indeed this is truly a praying in the ſpirit; but this will doe our reverend Brethren of the Aſſembly little advantage as to the preſent Queſtion. For this ſpirit is not a ſpirit of utterance; not at all clamorous in the eares of the people, but cryes loud in the eares of God with [*groanes unutterable*] ſo it followes, and only [*He that ſearcheth the heart, he underſtandeth the meaning of the ſpirit.*] This is the ſpirit of the Son, which God hath ſent into our hearts, (not into our tongues) whereby we cry, *Abba*, Father, *Gal.*4.6. And this is the great ἐνδιαθετον for mentall Prayer, which is properly and truly praying by the Spirit. *Numb.* 25.

Another praying with the Spirit I find in that place of S. *Paul*, from whence this expreſſion is taken, and commonly uſed, *I will pray with the ſpirit, and I will pray with the underſtanding alſo.* Here they are oppoſed, or at leaſt declared to be things ſeverall and diſparate: where by the way obſerve, that praying with the ſpirit, even in ſenſe of Scripture, is not alwayes moſt to edification of the people. Not alwayes with underſtanding. And when theſe two are ſeparated, St *Paul* prefers five words with underſtanding, before ten thouſand in the ſpirit. For this praying with the ſpirit was indeed then a gift extraordinary and miraculous, *Numb.* 26.

like as propheeying with the spirit, and expired with it. But while it did last, it was the lowest of gifts, *Inter dona linguarum*, it was but a gift of the tongue, and not to be the benefit of the Church directly or immediately.

Numb. 27. By the way only. If Saint *Paul* did so undervalve the praying with the Spirit, that he preferred edifying the Church a thousand degrees beyond it. I suppose he would have been of the same mind, if this Question had been between praying with the Spirit and obeying our superiors, as he was when it was between praying with the Spirit and edification of the Church, because (if I be not mistaken) it is matter of great concernment towards the edification of the Church to obey our superiours, not to innovate in publick formes of worship, especially with the scandall and offence of very wise and learned men, and to the disgrace of the dead Martyrs, who sealed our Liturgy with their blood.

Numb. 28. But to return. In this place praying with the Spirit, is no more then my spirit praying. For so S. *Paul* joynes them as terms identicall, and expressive one of anothers meaning, as you may please to read *ver.* 14. and 15. 1 *Cor.* 14. *I will pray with the Spirit, and my Spirit truly prayeth.* It is the act of our inner man, praying holy and spirituall Prayers. But then indeed at that time there was something extraordinary joyned, for it was in an unknown tongue, the practice of which S. *Paul* there dislikes. This also will be to none of their purposes. For whether it were *ex tempore*, or by premeditation, is not here expressed; or if it had, yet that assistance extraordinary in prayer, if there was any beside the gift of tongues (which I much doubt) is no more transmitted to us, then the speaking tongues in the spirit, or propheeying *ex tempore* and by the spirit.

Numb. 29. But I would adde also one experiment which S. *Paul* also there addes by way of instance. If praying with the spirit in this place be praying *ex tempore*, then so is singing too. For they are expressed in the same place, in the same manner, to the same end, and I know no reason why there should be differing senses put upon them to serve purposes. And now let us have some Church-musick too, though the Organs be pulled down, and let any the best Psalmist of them all, compose a hymne in metricall forme,

and

and ſing it to a new tune with perfect and true muſick, and all this *ex tempore*. For all this the holy Ghoſt can doe if he pleaſes. But if it be ſaid that the *Corinthian* Chriſtians compoſed their ſongs and hymnes according to art and rules of muſick, by ſtudy and induſtry, and that to this they were aſſiſted by the Spirit; and that this together with the devotion of their ſpirit, was ſinging with the ſpirit, then ſay I, ſo compoſing ſet forms of Lyturgy by skill and prudence, and humane induſtry, may be as much praying with the ſpirit as the other is ſinging with the ſpirit. Plainly enough. In all the ſenſes of praying with the ſpirit, and in all its acceptations in Scripture, to pray or ſing with the ſpirit, neither of them of neceſſity implyes *ex tempore*.

The ſumme or *Collecta* of the premiſes is this, Praying with the ſpirit, is either when the ſpirit ſtirres up our deſires to pray, *Per motionem actualis auxilii*, or when the ſpirit teaches us what, or how to pray, telling us the matter, and manner of our prayers. Or laſtly, dictating the very words of our prayers. There is no other way in the world to pray with the ſpirit, or in the holy Ghoſt, that is pertinent to this Queſtion. And of this laſt manner the Scripture determines nothing, nor ſpeaks any thing expreſſely of it, and yet ſuppoſe it had, we are certaine the holy Ghoſt hath ſupplyed us with all theſe, and yet in ſet formes of prayer beſt of all, I meane there where a difference can be. For as for the deſires, and actuall motions or incitements to pray, they are indifferent to one or the other, to ſet-forms or to *ex tempore*. 2. But as to the matter and manner of prayer, it is clearly contained in the expreſſes, and ſet forms of Scriptures, and it is ſupplyed to us by the ſpirit, for he is the great Dictaror of it. *Numb.* 30.

Now then for the very words. No man can aſſure me that the words of his *ex tempore* prayer are the words of the holy Spirit: it is not reaſon nor modeſty to expect ſuch immediate aſſiſtances to ſo little purpoſe, he having ſupplyed us with abilities more then enough to expreſſe our deſires *aliunde*, otherwiſe then by immediate dictate. But if we will take *Davids* Pſalter, or the other hymnes of holy Scripture, or any of the Prayers which are reſperſed over the Bible, we are ſure enough that they are the words of Gods Spirit, mediately or immediately, by way of infuſion or extaſie, by viſion, or at leaſt by ordinary aſſiſtance. And *Numb.* 31.

now

now then, what greater confidence can any man have for the excellency of his Prayer, and the probability of their being accepted, then when he prayes his Pſalter, or the Lords Prayer, or another office which he finds configned in Scripture? When Gods Spirit ſtirs us up to an actuall devotion, and then we uſe the matter hee hath deſcribed and taught, and the very words which Chriſt, and Chriſts Spirit, and the Apoſtles, and other perſons full of the holy Ghoſt did uſe; if in the world there be any praying with the Spirit, (I mean in vocall prayer) this is it.

And thus I have examined the intire and full ſcope of this Queſtion, and rifled their Objection. Now I ſhall proceed to ſome few Arguments which are more extrinſecall to the nature of the thing.

Numb. 32. It is a practice prevailing among thoſe of our Brethren that are zealous for *ex tempore* prayers, to pray their Sermons over, to reduce their doctrine into Devotion and Lyturgy. I miſlike it not for the thing it ſelfe, if it were done regularly for the manner, and the matter were alwayes pious and true. But who ſhall aſſure me when the preacher hath diſputed, or rather dogmatically decreed a point of predeſtination, or of preſcience, of contingency, or of liberty, or any of the moſt myſterious parts of Divinity, and then prayes his Sermon over, that he then prayes with the Spirit? Unleſſe I be ſure that he alſo preached with the Spirit, I cannot be ſure that he prayes with the ſpirit, for all he prayes *ex tempore*. Nay, if I heare a Proteſtant preach in the morning, and an Anabaptiſt in the afternoone, to day a Presbyterian, to morrow an Independent, am I not moſt ſure that when they have preached Contradictories, and all of them pray their Sermons over, that they doe not all pray with the ſpirit? More than one in this caſe cannot pray with the ſpirit, poſſibly all may pray againſt him.

Numb. 33. 2. From whence I thus argue in behalfe of ſet forms of prayer. That in the caſe above put, how ſhall I or any man elſe ſay Amen to their prayers that preach and pray contradictories? At leaſt I am much hindred in my devotion. For beſides that, it derives our opinions into our devotions, makes every ſchoole point become our religion, and makes God a party, (ſo farre as we can) intitling him to our impertinent wranglings. Beſides this,

this, I ſay, while we ſhould attend to our addreſſes towards God, we are to conſider whether the point be true or no, and by that time we have tacitly diſcourſed it, we are upon another point which alſo perhaps is as Queſtionable as the former, and by this time our ſpirit of devotion is a little diſcompoſed and ſomething out of countenance, there is ſo much other imployment for the ſpirit, the ſpirit of diſcerning and judging. All which inconveniences are avoyded in ſet formes of Liturgy. For we know before hand the conditions of our Communion, and to what we are to ſay Amen, to which if we like it we may repaire; if not, there is no harm done; your devotion ſhall not be ſurprized, nor your Communion invaded, as it may be and often is in your *ex tempore* prayers. And this thing hath another collaterall inconvenience, which is of great conſideration; for upon what confidence can we ſollicite any Recuſants to come to our Church, where we cannot promiſe them that the devotions there to be uſed, ſhall be innocent, nor can we put him into a condition to judge for himſelfe? If hee will venture he may, but we can uſe no Argument to make him chooſe our Churches, though he ſhould quit his own.

3. But again, let us conſider with ſobriety. Are not thoſe prayers and hymnes in holy Scripture, excellent compoſitions, admirable inſtruments of devotion, full of piety, rare and incomparable addreſſes to God? Dare any man with his gift of prayer pretend, that he can *ex tempore* or by ſtudy make better? Who dares pretend that he hath a better ſpirit then *David* had, or then the Apoſtles and Prophets, and other holy perſons in Scripture, whoſe Prayers and Pſalmes are by Gods Spirit conſigned to the uſe of the Church for ever? Or will it be denyed but that they alſo are excellent directories and patterns for prayer? And if patterns, the nearer we draw to our example, are not the imitations and repreſentments the better? And what then if we took the ſamplers themſelves, is there any imperfection in them, and can we mend them and correct *Magnificat?* *Numb.* 34.

In a juſt porportion and commenſuration, I argue ſo concerning the primitive and ancient forms of Church ſervice, which are compoſed according to thoſe ſo excellent patterns, which if they had remained pure as in their firſt inſtitution, or had alwayes been *Numb.* 35.

as they have been reformed by the Church of *England*, they would againſt all defiance put in for the next place to thoſe formes or Liturgy which *Mutatis mutandis* are nothing but the Words of Scripture. But I am reſolved at this preſent not to enter into Queſtion concerning the matter of prayers. But for the forme this I ſay further.

Numb. 36. 4. That the Church of God hath the promiſe of the ſpirit made to her in generall, to her in her Catholick and united capacity, to the whole Church firſt, then to particular Churches, then in the loweſt ſeat of the Category to ſingle perſons. Now then I infer, if any ſingle perſons will have us to believe without all poſſibility of prooſe (for ſo it muſt be) that they pray with the Spirit, (for how ſhall they be able to prove the ſpirit actually to abide in thoſe ſingle perſons) then much rather muſt we believe it of the Church, which by how much the more generall it is, ſo much the more of the ſpirit ſhe is likely to have; and then if there be no errours in the matter, the Church hath the advantage and probability on her ſide, and if there be an errour in matter in either of them, they faile of their pretences, neither of them have the ſpirit. But the publick ſpirit in all reaſon is to be truſted before the private, when there is a conteſtation, the Church being *Prior & potior in promiſſis*, ſhe hath a greater and *prior* title to the ſpirit. And why the Church hath not the ſpirit of prayer in her compoſitions as well as any of her children, I deſire once for all to be ſatisfied upon true grounds either of reaſon or revelation.

Numb. 37. 5. Or if the Church ſhall be admitted to have the gift, and the ſpirit of prayer given unto her by virtue of the great promiſe of the ſpirit, to abide with her for ever, yet for all this ſhe is taught to pray in a ſet form of prayer, and yet by the ſpirit too. For what think we? When Chriſt taught us to pray in that incomparable modell, the Lords Prayer, if we pray that prayer devoutly, and with pious and actuall intention, doe we not pray in the Spirit of Chriſt, as much as if we prayed any other form of words pretended to be taught us by the Spirit? Wee are ſure that Chriſt and Chriſts Spirit taught us this Prayer; they only gather by conjectures and opinions, that in their *ex tempore* forms the ſpirit of Chriſt teaches them. So much then as certainties

certainties are better then uncertaines, and God above man, ſo much is this ſet form (beſides the infinite advantages in the matter) better then their *ex tempore* forms in the form it ſelfe.

6. If I ſhould deſcend to minutes and particulars, I could inſtance in the behalfe of ſet forms, that God preſcribed to *Moſes* a ſet form of prayer and benediction to be uſed when he did bleſſe the people. *Numb.* 38. 7. That *Moſes* compoſed a ſong or hymne for the children of Iſrael to uſe to all their generations. 8. That *David* compoſed many for the ſervice of the tabernacle. 9. That *Solomon* and the holy Kings of *Judah* brought them in and continued them in the miniſtration of the temple. 10. That all Scripture is written for our learning, and ſince all theſe and many more ſet forms of prayer are left there upon record, it is more then probable that they were left there for our uſe and devotion. 11. That S. *John* Baptiſt taught his Diſciples a forme of prayer. 12. And that Chriſts Diſciples begged the ſame favour, and it was granted as they deſired it. 13. And that Chriſt gave it not only *in maſſâ materiæ*, but *in formâ verborum*; not in a confuſed heap of matter, but in an exact compoſure of words, it makes it evident, he intended it not only *pro regulâ petendorum*, for a direction of what things we are to ask, but alſo *pro formâ orationis*, for a ſet form of Prayer. In which alſo I am moſt certainly confirmed (beſides the univerſall teſtimony of Gods Church ſo atteſting it) in the precept which Chriſt added, *When ye pray, pray after this manner*: and indeed it points not the matter only of our prayers, but the form of it, the manner and the matter of the addreſſe both. But in the repetition of it by Saint *Luke*, the preceptive words ſeeme to limit us, and direct us to this very form of words, *When ye pray, ſay, Our Father, &c.* 14. I could alſo adde the example of all the Jewes, and by conſequence of our bleſſed Saviour, who ſung a great part of *Davids* Pſalter in their feaſt of Paſſeover, which part is called by the Iewes the great *Hallelujah*, it begins at the 113 Pſalm, and ends at the 118 incluſively. And the Scripture mentions it as part of our bleſſed Saviours devotion, and of his Diſciples, that they ſung a Pſalme. 15. That this afterward became a Precept Evangelicall, that we ſhould praiſe God in Hymnes, Pſalmes, and ſpirituall Songs, which is a form of Liturgy, in

which we ſing with the ſpirit, but yet cannot make our Hymnes *ex tempore*, (it would be wild ſtuffe if we ſhould goe about it.) 16. And laſtly, that a ſet form of worſhip and addreſſe to God
Apoc. 15. was recorded by Saint *John*, and ſung in heaven, and it was compoſed out of the ſongs of *Moſes*, (*Exod.*15.) of *David*, *Pſal.*145.) and of *Jeremy*, (*Chap.*10.6,7.) which certainly is a very good precedent for us to imitate, although but revealed to Saint *John* by way of viſion and extaſie. All which and many more are to me as ſo many Arguments of the uſe, excellency, and neceſſity of ſet forms of Prayer for publick Liturgies, and of greateſt conveniencie, even for private devotions.

Numb. 39. 17. And ſo the Church of God in all Ages did underſtand it. I ſhall not multiply Authorities to this purpoſe, for they are too many and various; but ſhall only obſerve two great inſtances of their beliefe and practiſe in this particular. 1. The one is the perpetuall uſe and great Eulogies of the Lords Prayer, aſſiſted by the many Commentaries of the Fathers upon it. 2. The other is that ſolemn form of benediction and myſticall prayer (as Saint *Auguſtine* calls it, *Lib.*3. *de Trinit.c.*4.) which all Churches (and themſelves ſaid it was by Ordinance Apoſtolicall) uſed in the Conſecration of the bleſſed Sacrament. But all of them uſed the Lords Prayer in the Canon, and office of Conſecration, and other prayers taken from Scripture, (ſo *Juſtin Martyr* teſtifies, that the Conſecration is made *per preces verbi Dei*, by the prayers taken from the Word of God) and the whole Canon was ſhort, determined and myſterious.

Numb. 40. Who deſires to be further ſatisfied in this particular, ſhall find enough in *Walafridus Strabo*, *Aymonius*, *Caſſander*, *Flacius Illyricus*, *Joſephus Vicecomes*, and the other Ritualiſts, and in the old offices themſelves. So that I need not put you in mind of that famous doxology of *Gloria Patria*, *&c.* nor the *Triſagion*, nor any of thoſe memorable hymnes uſed in the Ancient Church, ſo knownly and frequently, that the beginning of them came to bee their name, and they were known more by their own words, then the Authors inſcription.

Numb. 41. At laſt when ſome men that thought themſelves better gifted would be venturing at conceived formes of their own, there was a timely reſtraint made in the Councell of *Milevis* in *Africa*,

Africa, Placuit ut preces quæ probatæ fuerint in Concilio ab omnibus celebrentur, nec aliæ omnino dicantur in Ecclesia, nisi quæ à prudentioribus factæ fuerint in Synodo. That's the restraint and prohibition, publick prayers must be such as are publickly appointed, and prescribed by our Superiours; and no private forms of our conceiving must be used in the Church. The reason followes, *Ne forte aliquid contra fidem, vel per ignorantiam, vel per minus studium sit compositum:* Lest through ignorance or want of deliberation any thing be spoken in our prayers against faith [and good manners.] The reason is good, and they are eare-witnesses of it that hear the variety of prayers before and after Sermons, there, where the Directory is practised, where (to speak most modestly) not only their private opinions, but also humane interests, and their own personall concernments, and wild fancies, born perhaps not two dayes before, are made the objects of the peoples hopes, of their desires, and their prayers, and all in the meane time pretend to the holy Spirit.

I will not now instance in the vaine-glory that is appendant to these *ex tempore* formes of prayer, where the gift of the man is more then the devotion of the man: nor will I consider that then his gift is best, when his prayer is longest: and if he take a complacency in his gift (as who is not apt to doe it?) he will be sure to extend his Prayer, till a suspicious and scrupulous man would be apt to say, his prayer pressed hard upon that which our blessed Saviour reprehended in the Pharisees, who thought to bee heard for their much babling. But these things are accidentall to the nature of the thing. And therefore though they are too certainly consequent to the person, yet I will not be too severe, but preserve my selfe on the surer side of charitable construction, which truly I desire to keep, not only to their persons whom I much reverence, but also to their actions. But yet I dare not doe the same thing, even for these last reasons, though I had no other. *Numb.* 42.

But it is objected, that in set forms of Prayer, we restrain and confine the blessed Spirit; and in conceived forms, when every man is left to his liberty, then the Spirit is free, unlimited and unconstrained. *Numb.* 43.

I answer, either their conceived formes (I take their own words, though *Numb.* 44.

though indeed the expreſſion is very inartificiall) are premeditate and deſcribed, or they are *ex tempore*. If they be premeditate and deſcribed, then the Spirit is as much limited in their conceived ſorms as in the Churches conceived forms. For as to this particular, it is all one who deſcribes and limits the form, whether the Church, or a ſingle man does it, ſtill the Spirit is in conſtraint and limit. So that in this caſe they are not angry at ſet forms of Prayer, but that they do not make them. And if it be replyed, that if a ſingle perſon compoſes a ſet form, he may alter it if he pleaſe, and ſo his ſpirit is at liberty. I anſwer, ſo may the Church, if ſhe ſee cauſe for it: and unleſſe there be cauſe, the ſingle perſon will not alter it, unleſſe he do things unreaſonable and without cauſe. So that it will be an unequall and a peeviſh quarrell to allow of ſet forms of prayer made by private perſons, and not of ſet forms made by the publick ſpirit of the Church. It is evident, that the Spirit is limited in both alike.

Numb. 45. But if by [*Conceived forms*] in this objection they meane *ex tempore* prayers (for ſo they moſt generally practice it) and that in the uſe of theſe the liberty of the ſpirit is beſt preſerved. To this I anſwer, that the being *ex tempore* or premeditate will be wholly impertinent to this Queſtion of limiting the ſpirit. For there may be great liberty in ſet forms, even when there is much variety; and there may be great reſtraint in *ex tempore* prayers, even then when it ſhall be called unlawfull to uſe ſet forms. That the ſpirit is reſtrained, or that it is free in either, is accidentall to them both; for it may be either free or not free in both as it may happen.

Numb. 46. But the reſtraint is this, that every one is not left to his liberty to pray how he liſt, (with premeditation or without, it makes not much matter) but that he is preſcribed unto by the ſpirit of another. But if it be a fault thus to reſtraine the ſpirit, I would faine know, is not the ſpirit reſtrained when the whole Congregation ſhall be confined to the form of this one mans compoſing? or it ſhall be unlawfull, or at leaſt a diſgrace and diſparagement to uſe any ſet forms, eſpecially of the Churches compoſition. More plainly thus.

Numb. 47. 2. Doth not the Miniſter confine and reſtraine the ſpirit of the Lords People, when they are tyed to his form? It would ſound

ſound of more liberty to their ſpirits, that every one might make a prayer of his own and all pray together; and not be forced or confined to the Miniſters ſingle dictate, and private ſpirit. It is true, it would breed confuſions, and therefore they might pray ſilently till the Sermon began, and not for the avoiding one inconvenience runne into a greater, and to avoid the diſorder of a popular noyſe reſtraine the bleſſed Spirit; for even in this caſe as well as in the other, *Where the ſpirit of God is, there muſt be liberty.*

3. If the ſpirit muſt be at liberty, who ſhall aſſure us this liberty muſt be in forms of prayer? And if ſo, whether alſo it muſt be in publike prayer, and will it not ſuffice that it be in private? And if in publike prayers, is not the liberty of the ſpirit ſufficiently preſerved in that the publike ſpirit is free? That is, the Church hath power upon occaſion to alter and encreaſe her Litanyes. By what Argument ſhall any man make it ſo much as probable, that the holy Ghoſt is injured, if every private Miniſters private ſpirit ſhall be guided (and therefore by neceſſary conſequence limited) by the Authority of the Churches publick ſpirit? *Numb.* 48.

4. Does not the Directory that thing which is here called reſtraining of the ſpirit? Does it not appoint every thing but the words? And after this is it not a goodly *Palladium* that is contended for, and a princely liberty that they leave unto the Spirit, to be free only in the ſupplying the place of a Vocabulary and a *Copia Verborum?* For as for the matter, it is all there deſcribed and appointed, and to thoſe determined ſenſes the ſpirit muſt aſſiſt or not at all, only for the words he ſhall take his choyce. Now I deſire it may be conſidered ſadly and ſeriouſly: Is it not as much injury to the ſpirit to reſtraine his matter, as to appoint his words? Which is the more conſiderable of the two, ſenſe or Language, Matter or Words? I meane when they are taken ſingly and ſeparately. For ſo they may very well be (for as if men preſcribe the matter only, the ſpirit may cover it with ſeverall words and expreſſions; ſo if the ſpirit preſcribe the words, I may ſtill abound in variety of ſenſe, and preſerve the liberty of my meaning; we ſee that true in the various interpretations of the ſame words of Scripture.) So that in the *Numb.* 49.

greater.

greater of the two, the Spirit is restrained, when his matter is appointed, and to make him amends, for not trusting him with the matter without our directions and limitations, we trust him to say what he pleases, so it be to our sense, to our purposes. A goodly compensation surely!

Numb. 50. 5. Did not Christ restrain the spirit of his Apostles, when he taught them to pray the Lords Prayer, whether his precept to his Disciples concerning it, was *Pray this*, or *Pray thus*, *Pray these words*, or *pray after this manner?* or though it had been lesse then either, and been only a Directory for the matter, still it is a thing which our Brethren in all other cases of the same nature are resolved perpetually to call a restraint. Certainly then this pretended restraint, is no such formidable thing. These men themselves doe it by directing all the matter, and much of the manner, and Christ himselfe did it, by prescribing both the matter, and the words too.

Numb. 51. 6. These restraints (as they are called) or determinations of the Spirit are made by the Spirit himselfe. For I demand, when any Assembly of Divines appointed the matter of Prayers to all particular Ministers as this hath done, is that appointment by the Spirit or no? If no, then for ought appears, this Directory not being made by Gods Spirit, may be an enemy to it. But if this appointment be by the Spirit, then the determination and limitation of the Spirit, is by the Spirit himself, and such indeed is every pious and prudent constitution of the Church in matters spirituall: Such as was that of S. *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, when he prescribed orders for publike prophecying, and interpretation, and speaking with tongues. The spirit of some he so restrained, that he bound them to hold their peace, he permitted but two or three to speak at one meeting, the rest were to keep silence, though possibly six or seven might at that time have the Spirit.

Numb. 52. 7. Is it not a restraint of the Spirit to sing a Psalm in meeter by appointment? Cleerely as much as appointing formes of prayer or Eucharist. And yet that we see done daily, and no scruple made. Is not this to be partiall in judgement, and inconsiderate of what wee doe?

Numb. 53. 8. And now after all this strife, what harm is there in restraining the spirit in the present sense? What prohibition, what law, what

what reaſon or revelation is againſt it? What inconvenience in the nature of the thing? For can any man be ſo weak as to imagine a deſpite is done to the ſpirit of grace, when thoſe gifts to his Church are uſed regularly and by order? As if prudence were no gift of Gods ſpirit, as if helps in Government, and the ordering ſpirituall matters were none of thoſe graces which Chriſt when he aſcended up on high gave unto Men. But this whole matter is wholly a ſtranger to reaſon, and never ſeen in Scripture.

For Divinity never knew any other vitious reſtraining of the Spirit, but either ſuppreſſing thoſe holy incitements to virtue and good life, which Gods Spirit miniſters to us externally or internally, or elſe a forbidding by publick Authority the Miniſters of the Word and Sacraments, to ſpeak ſuch truths as God hath commended, and ſo taking away the liberty of Prophecying. The firſt is directly vitious *In materia ſpeciale*, the ſecond is tyrannicall and Antichriſtian. And to it perſecution of true Religion is to be reduced. But as for this pretended limiting or reſtraining the ſpirit, *viz.* by appointing a regular form of prayer, it is ſo very a Chimera, that it hath no footing or foundation upon any ground where a wiſe man may build his confidence. *Numb.* 54.

9. But laſtly, how if the ſpirit muſt be reſtrained, and that by precept Apoſtolicall? That calls us to a new account. But if it be not true, what meanes S. *Paul*, by ſaying *The ſpirits of the Prophets muſt be ſubject to the Prophets?* What greater reſtraint then ſubjection? If ſubjected, then they muſt be ruled; if ruled, then limited, preſcribed unto, and as much under reſtraint as the ſpirits of the ſuperiour Prophets ſhall judge convenient. I ſuppoſe by this time this objection will trouble us no more. But perhaps another will. *Numb.* 55.

For why are not the Miniſters to be left as well to their liberty in making their Prayers as their Sermons? I anſwer, the Church may if ſhe will, but whether ſhe doth well or no, let her conſider. This I am ſure, there is not the ſame reaſon, and I fear the experience the world hath already had of it, will make demonſtration enough of the inconvenience. But however the differences are many. *Numb.* 56.

1. Our prayers offered up by the Miniſter, are in behalfe and *Numb.* 57.

in the name of the people, and therefore great reaſon they ſhould know before-hand, what is to be preſented, that if they like not the meſſage, they may refuſe to communicate; eſpecially ſince people are ſo divided in their opinions, in their hopes, and in their faiths: it being a duty to refuſe Communion with thoſe prayers which they think to have in them the matter of ſin or doubting. Which reaſon on the other part ceaſes, for the Miniſter being to ſpeak from God to the people, if he ſpeaks what he ought not, God can right himſelfe, however is not partner of the ſinne, as in the other caſe, the people poſſibly may be.

Numb. 58. 2. It is more fit a liberty be left in preaching then praying, becauſe the addreſſe of our diſcourſes and exhortations are to be made according to the underſtanding and capacity of the audience, their prejudices are to be removed, all advantages to be taken, and they are to be ſurprized that way they lie moſt open [*But being crafty I caught you*, ſaith Saint *Paul* to the *Corinthians*] and diſcourſes and arguments *ad hominem*, upon their particular principles and practices may more move them then the moſt polite and accurate that doe not comply and wind about their fancies and affections. S. *Paul* from the abſurd practice of being baptized for the dead, made an excellent Argument to convince the *Corinthians* of the Reſurrection. But this reaſon alſo ceaſes in our prayers. For God underſtandeth what we ſay ſure enough, he hath no prejudices to be removed, no infirmities to be wrought upon, and a fine figure of Rhetorick, a pleaſant cadence, and a curious expreſſion, move not him at all; no other twinings and complyances ſtirre him, but charity, and humility, and zeale, and importunity, which all are things internall and ſpirituall. And therefore of neceſſity there is to be great variety of diſcourſes to the people, and permiſſions accordingly, but not ſo to God, with whom a *Deus miſerere* prevailes as ſoon as the great office of 40 houres not long ſince invented in the Church of *Rome*, or any other prayers ſpun out to a length beyond the extenſion of the office of a Phariſee.

Numb. 59. 3. I feare it cannot ſtand with our reverence to God, to permit to every ſpirit a liberty of publike addreſſe to him in behalfe of the people. Indeed he that is not fit to pray, is not alwayes fit to preach; but it is more ſafe to be bold with the people then with

with God, if the perſons be not ſo fit. In that there may be indiſcretion, but there may be impiety and irreligion in this. The people may better excuſe and pardon an indiſcretion or a rudeneſſe (if any ſuch ſhould happen) then we may venture to offer it to God.

4. There is a latitude of Theology, much whereof is left to us, ſo, without preciſe and clear determination, that without breach either of faith or charity, men may differ in opinion: and if they may not be permitted to abound in their own ſenſe, they will be apt to complaine of tyrannie over conſciences, and that men Lord it over their faith. In Prayer this thing is ſo different, that it is imprudent and full of inconvenience to derive ſuch things into our prayers, which may with good profit be matter of Sermons. Therefore here a liberty may well enough be granted, when there it may better be denyed. *Numb.* 60.

5. But indeed, if I may freely declare my opinion, I think it were not amiſſe if the liberty of making Sermons were ſomething more reſtrained then it is, and that either ſuch perſons only were intruſted with liberty for whom the Church her ſelfe may ſafely bee reſponſall, that is, to men learned and pious, and that the other part, the *Vulgus Cleri*, ſhould inſtruct the people out of the fountaines of the Church, and upon the publick ſtock, till by ſo long exerciſe and diſcipline in the Schooles of the Prophets, they may alſo be intruſted to miniſter of their own unto the people. This I am ſure was the practice of the Primitive Church when Preaching was as ably and religiouſly performed as now it is. But in this I preſcribe nothing. But truly I think the reverend Divines of the Aſſembly are many of my mind in this particular, and that they obſerve a liberty indulged to ſome perſons to preach, which I think they had rather ſhould hold their peace, and yet think the Church better edified in your ſilence then their Sermons. *Numb.* 61.

6. But yet me thinks the Argument objected, if it were turned with the edge the other way, would have more reaſon in it: and inſtead of arguing [*Why ſhould not the ſame be allowed in praying as in preaching*] it were better to ſubſtitute this. It they can pray with the ſpirit, why alſo doe they not preach with the ſpirit? and if praying with the ſpirit be praying *ex* *Numb.* 62.

tempore, why ſhall they not preach *ex tempore* too, or elſe confeſſe that they preach without the ſpirit, or that they have not the gift of Preaching? For to ſay that the gift of prayer, is a gift *ex tempore*, but the gift of Preaching is with ſtudy and deliberation, is to become vaine and impertinent. *Quis enim diſcrevit?* Who hath made them of a different conſideration? I mean as to this particular, as to their efficient cauſe. Nor reaſon, nor revelation, nor God, nor man.

Numb. 63. To ſumme up all. If any man hath a mind to exerciſe his gift of Prayer, let him ſet himſelf to work, and compoſe Books of Devotion, (we have great need of them in the Church of *England*, ſo apparent need, that the Papiſts have made it an objection againſt us) and this his gift of Prayer will bee to edification. But otherwiſe, I underſtand it is more fit for oſtentation, then any ſpirituall advantage. For God hears us not the ſooner for our *ex tempore*, long, or conceived prayers; poſſibly they may becc̃me a hindrance, as in the caſes before inſtanced. And I am ſure if the people be intelligent, and can diſcern, they are hindred in their Devotion, for they dare not ſay *Amen* till they have conſidered; and many ſuch caſes will occurre in *ex tempore* prayers, that need much conſidering before we atteſt them. But if the people bee not intelligent, they are apt to ſwallow all the inconveniencies which may multiply in ſo great a licence; and therefore it were well that the Governours of the Church who are to anſwer for their ſoules, ſhould judge for them, before they ſay *Amen*, which judgement cannot bee without ſet-forms of Liturgy. My ſentence therefore is, ἵνα μένωμεν ὅπερ ἐσμεν, Let us be as we are already. Few changes are for the better.

Numb. 64. For if it be pretended, that in the Liturgy of the Church of *England*, which was compoſed with much art and judgement by a Church that hath as much reaſon to be confident ſhe hath the Spirit and gifts of Prayer, as any ſingle perſon hath, and each learned man that was at its firſt compoſition, can as much prove that he had the Spirit, as the objectors now adayes: (and he that boaſts moſt, certainly hath the leaſt.) If I ſay it be pretended, there are many errours and inconveniences both in the order and the matter of the Common-Prayer Book, made by ſuch

ſuch men, with ſo much induſtry: How much more, and with how much greater reaſon may we all dread the inconveniencies and diſorders of *ex tempore* prayers? where there is neither conjunction of heads, nor premeditation, nor induſtry, nor method, nor art, nor any of thoſe things (or at leaſt not in the ſame degree) which were likely to have exempted the Common Prayer Book from errours and diſorders. If theſe things be in the green tree, what will be done in the dry?

But if it be ſaid, the *ex tempore* and conceived prayers will be ſecured from errour by the Directory, becauſe that chalks them out the matter. I anſwer, it is not ſufficient, becauſe if when men ſtudy both the matter and the words too, they may be (and it is pretended are actually) erroneous; much more may they when the matter is left much more at liberty, and the words under no reſtraint at all. And no man can avoid the preſſure and the weight of this, unleſſe the Compilers of the Directory were infallible, and that all their followers were ſo too, of the certainty of which I am not yet fully ſatisfied. *Numb.* 65.

And after all this I would fain know, what benefit and advantages ſhall the Church of *England* in her united capacity, and every particular in the diffuſed capacity receive by this new deviee? For the publike it is cleare, that whether the Miniſters pray before they ſtudy, or ſtudy before they pray, there muſt needs be infinite deformity in the publike worſhip, and all the benefits which were before the conſequents of conformity and unity, will be loſt, and if they be not valuable, I leave it to all them to conſider, who know the inconveniences of publike diſunion, and the publike diſunion that is certainly conſequent to them who doe not communicate in any common formes of worſhip. And to think that the Directory will bring conformity, is as if one ſhould ſay, that all who are under the ſame Hemiſphere are joyned *in communi patriâ*, and will love like Countrymen; for under the Directory there will be as different Religions, and as different deſires, and as differing formes as there are ſeverall varieties of men and manners under the one halfe of heaven, who yet breath under the ſame halfe of the Globe. But I ask again, what benefit can the publike receive by this forme, or this no forme, for I know not whether to call it. Shall the *Numb.* 66.

matter of prayers be better in all Churches? ſhall God be better ſerved? ſhall the word of God and the beſt patterns of prayers be alwayes exactly followed? It is well if it be. But there is ſecurity given us by the Directory; for the matter is left at every mans diſpoſe for all that, and we muſt depend upon the honeſty of every particular for it; and if any man proves a Heretick, or a Knave, then he may introduce what impiety he pleaſe, into the publick formes of Gods worſhip; and there is no law made to prevent it, and it muſt be cured afterwards if it can; but before-hand it is not prevented at all by the Directory, which truſts every man. But I obſerve, that all the benefit which is pretended, is, that it will make an able Miniſtery, which I confeſſe I am very much from believing, and ſo will every man be that conſiders what kind of men they are that have been moſt zealous for that way of conceived prayer. I am ſure that very few of the learnedſt, very many ignorants, moſt thoſe who have made leaſt abode in the Schools of the Prophets. And that I may diſgrace no mans perſon, we ſee Tradeſmen of the moſt illiberall arts, and women pretend to it, and doe it with as many words (and that's the maine thing) with as much confidence, and ſpeciouſneſſe, and ſpirit, as the beſt among them. And it is but a ſmall portion of learning that will ſerve a man to make conceived formes of prayer, which they have eaſily upon the ſtock of other men, or upon their own fancie, or upon any thing in which no learning is required. He that knowes nothing of the craft may be in the Preachers trade. But what? Is God better ſerved? I would faine ſee any Authority, or any reaſon, or any probability for that. I am ſure ignorant men offer him none of the beſt ſacrifices *ex tempore*, and learned men will be ſure to deliberate, and know. God is then better ſerved, when he ſerved by a publike, then when by a private ſpirit. I cannot imagine what accruements will hence come to the publike: it may be ſome advantages may be to the private intereſts of men. For there are a ſort of men whom our bleſſed Saviour noted, who do *devoure widowes houſes, and for a pretence make long prayers.* They make prayers, and they make them long, by this meanes, they receive double advantages, for they get reputation to their ability, and to their piety. And

although

although the Common-prayer Book in the Preface to the Directory bee charged with unneceſſary length, yet we ſee that moſt of theſe men, they that are moſt eminent or would be ſo, make their prayers longer, and will not loſe the benefits which their credit gets, and they by their credit, for making their prayers.

Adde to this that there is no promiſe in Scripture, that he who prayes *ex tempore* ſhall be heard the better, or that he ſhall bee aſſiſted at all to ſuch purpoſes; and therefore to innovate in ſo high a matter without a warrant to command us, or a promiſe to warrant us, is no better then vanity in the thing, and preſumption in the perſon. He therefore that conſiders that this way of prayer is without all manner of precedent in the Primitive Church, againſt the example of all famous Churches in all Chriſtendome in the whole deſcent of 15. Ages, without all command and warrant of Scripture, that it is unreaſonable in the nature of the thing, againſt prudence and the beſt wiſedome of humanity, becauſe it is without deliberation, that it is innovation in a high degree without that Authority which is truly and by inherent and ancient right to command and preſcribe to us in externall forms of worſhip, that it is much to the diſgrace of the firſt reformers of our Religion, that it gives encouragement to the Papiſts, to quarrell with ſome reaſon and more pretence againſt our Reformation, as being by the Directory confeſſed to have been done in much blindneſſe, and therefore might erre in the exceſſe as well as in the defect, in the throwing out too much, as caſting off too little, which is the more likely, becauſe they wanted zeale to carry it farre enough. He that conſiders the univerſall deformity of publike worſhip, and the no meanes of union, no Symbol of publike communion being publikely conſigned, that all Hereſies may with the ſame Authority bee brought into our prayers, and offered to God in behalfe of the people, with the ſame Authority that any truth may, all the matter of our prayers being left to the choyce of all men, of all perſwaſions, and then obſerves that actually there are in many places, hereſie, and blaſphemy, and impertinency, and illiterate rudeneſſes put into the devotions of the moſt Solemne dayes, and the moſt publike meetings;

meetings; and then lastly, that there are divers parts of Lyturgy, for which no provisions at all is made in the Directory, and the very administration of the Sacraments left so loosely, that if there be any thing essentiall in the forms of Sacraments, the Sacrament may come ineffectuall by want of due words, and due ministration. I say, he that considers all these things (and many more he may consider) will finde that particular men are not fit to be intrusted to offer in publike with their private spirit, to God, for the people, in such solemnities, in matters of so great concernment, where the honour of God, the benefit of the people, the interest of Kingdomes, the being of a Church, the unity of minds, the conformity of practice, the truth of perswasions, and the salvation of soules, are so very much concerned, as they are in the publike prayers of a whole Nationall Church. An unlearned man is not to be trusted, and a wise man dare not trust himselfe; hee that is ignorant cannot, he that is knowing will not.

The End.